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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000042

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF/SPG, SE WILLIAMSON,
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/12/2013

TAGS: [PREF](#) [SU](#) [AU](#) [UN](#) [PGOV](#)

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER ALOR: NEW MARCHING ORDERS FROM
BASHIR

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: In a January 12 meeting with Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (PDAS) Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the newly sworn in Foreign Minister (FM) Deng Alor said President Bashir had personally tasked him with taking the lead in improving bilateral relations between Sudan and the United States. PDAS, accompanied by CDA Fernandez and SPG and USAID representatives, strongly reiterated to the foreign minister the importance of permitting construction of the new embassy compound to resume, and that this issue was a security matter, not a political one. On Darfur, the FM characterized UNAMID deployment problems as "details" and simple to resolve. End summary.

OBSTRUCTION OF NEW EMBASSY COMPOUND

¶2. (C) PDAS opened the meeting by thanking newly appointed FM Alor for the government's cooperation in the ongoing investigation of the New Year's Day murders of USAID employees John Granville and Abdul Rahman Abbas. Noting that the murders had tremendously impacted the larger Embassy community and seriously changed its daily working conditions, PDAS urged the Sudanese government to allow construction of the new embassy compound to continue without further hindrance. The new embassy would be essential to the security of American personnel working in Sudan, she said.

¶3. (C) The new embassy was not a political issue, the FM said, but a procedural one (contradicting his own deputy at the MFA). In recent meetings the NCP and SPLM had agreed that it was necessary to improved bilateral relations with the United States, he told PDAS, and President Bashir had asked him to take the lead in doing so. It was the Sudanese government's responsibility to provide security for Americans in Sudan, and the new embassy was part of that. However, the FM also said that "things depend on bilateral relations" and the Sudanese Embassy in Washington also had outstanding issues to be addressed. "There are things we must do, and things you must do," he said. The FM also said that the NCP and SPLM had come to some agreement on other issues including the redeployment of forces, but that Abyei was still unresolved. Since Alor is from Abyei, he noted "I am pretty confident about CPA progress, except for the case of Abyei."

¶4. (C) PDAS cautioned the FM that the planned new Juba compound could also be in jeopardy if problems with the Khartoum embassy persisted. "We need assurances," she said; even with assurances, however, the Sudanese government's past about-faces would make it hard to convince Washington that it would be safe to proceed with the building. Contrary to what

other officials told PDAS (NISS head Salah Ghosh and State Minister al-Samani), the FM said, the Ministry of Finance was not the problem, but rather the strained bilateral relations. PDAS stressed that the new embassy must be seen as a security issue, and not a political or bilateral marker. Despite his remarks about Sudan-U.S. relations, the FM assured PDAS that the blocked containers would be released and that he would call the Finance Minister to suggest this move forward.

UNAMID ISSUES SHOULD BE RESOLVED

15. (C) On the recent SAF attack of a UNAMID convoy, the FM called the incident "unfortunate," but maintained that both sides were at fault and that better coordination on movements was necessary. Speaking to the political process in Darfur, he said that the SPLM had helped rebel movements come to some consensus about what their position. The SPLM was also sending another envoy to visit Abdul Wahid Nur in Paris. PDAS noted that she hoped the new U.S. special envoy would travel soon to Sudan. She also stressed the need to resolve outstanding issues on land rights and troop-contributing countries, and that Nepalese and Thai troops should be allowed to participate. The FM, aware of these details as well as the threats to oust the British UNAMID chief of staff, said, "We all agreed it would be a hybrid force. All that remains are the details." But these details are a tragedy, countered CDA Fernandez, telling the FM that they build an image of Sudan as untrustworthy.

SUDAN-U.S. RELATIONS MOVING IN NEW DIRECTION

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16. (C) The FM maintained that Sudan was "starting in a new direction," and wanted serious discussions with the United States. He had yet to inform others in the government of this new position, he admitted, but assured the delegation that President Bashir agreed. According to the FM, the president told him that since the SPLM was to blame for the government's problems with the U.S., the SPLM should be the ones to fix them. CDA told the FM that the NCP should rather thank the SPLM for what they've accomplished, especially with the Juba talks uniting Darfur rebel factions. CDA also encouraged the government to accept visits from U.S. Congressmembers, while USAID Mission Director Pat Fleuret urged the government to ease its restrictions on development work.

17. (C) Comment: This was the second meeting with Deng Alor since he assumed his new post some ten days ago. His assertion that the bilateral relations should move in more positive direction is welcome, though whether or not this view is really shared throughout the higher levels of government is unclear. Alor's confidence that the embassy compound issues could be rather simply resolved perhaps represents a "softer" side of the government's multi-layered approach to its dealings with the U.S., as opposed to the more hard-line statements of his non-SPLM colleagues (see septels). Alor also said that he planned to travel to the U.S. sometime in February, and that he would be happy to meet with A/S Frazer at upcoming AU summit in Addis Ababa. The Foreign Minister, a decent, approachable and pro-American official, has the unenviable task of presenting an unsavory regime's foreign policy to us, and to the world. End comment.

18. (U) PDAS Thomas-Greenfield did not have a chance to review this message before her departure.

FERNANDEZ